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Generals Are No Good

Former Artillery Captain Harry Truman has suddenly developed a low opinion of the military.

He is "dismayed and disheartened" that General Eisenhower has turned out to be a Republican. And he is now trying to convince his whistle-stop audiences that generals are not "qualified" for civilian office. Military men, it now turns out, live cloistered lives. They don't know the difference between liberalism and reaction. They have never felt the lack of social security. They have never met a payroll or carried a precinct.

"A military man should stick to his profession."

Maybe some people will swallow this line. But they would have to be almost as simple as the President says our generals are. Those with any memory at all are more likely to ask some embarrassing questions. For example:

Did the President hold his present strong views when he told General Eisenhower in 1945 that there was nothing he would not help him get—including the Presidency in 1948? Or when he propositioned Ike again on the same point in 1951?

Did he think all military men were incompetent to handle civilian affairs when he appointed General of the Army Marshall a special envoy to China, then Secretary of State, then Secretary of Defense?

Was the uniform a badge of sim-

plicity and ineptitude when he sent General Wedemeyer on his China mission, made General Bedell Smith and then Admiral Kirk ambassador to Moscow, dispatched Admiral Spruance to the Philippines embassy, General Fleming to Costa Rica, and finally (but for the intervention of Congress) General Clark to the Vatican?

Did he ignore background and qualification when he made Admiral Cochrane the Maritime Administrator, named Admiral Nimitz to the important Commission on Internal security and Individual Rights, Admiral Kincaid and General McLain to the National Security Training Commission?

The list could go on and on. Harry S. Truman, the anti-militarist, has used more military men in civilian assignments than any of his predecessors. And his present attitude just doesn't make much sense—except in terms we hesitate to recognize.

We suspect that most Americans who listen to his smears against the military now will not be convinced of General Eisenhower's lack of qualification. They will rather believe that a man who "stepped into political life 40 years ago" and has never known a non-political moment since, may himself have become blind to the realities and the values of the American Way.

They will see that it is Harry Truman, civilian, who has gotten out of touch with America.